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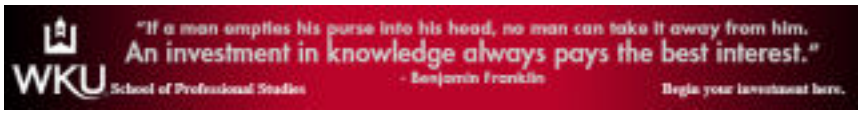


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Spring (green) cleaning

By CAROLINE EGGERS ceggers@bgdailynews.com 41 min ago

It’s not always intentional, but it’s always harmful.

Litter hurts a city’s beauty, environment and even some neighborhoods’ property values. It can kill animals, contaminate groundwater and cause vehicle accidents, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

To combat trash in Warren County, Operation P.R.I.D.E. will partner with the city of Bowling Green to host its first community cleaning day, “Clean the Green,” from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday.

The idea is to declutter green spaces and promote a greater appreciation for the land, according to Angie Alexieff, director of Operation P.R.I.D.E.

“We certainly have a litter problem,” Alexieff said, but “we’re always striving to do better.”

Volunteers will meet at Kereiakes Park at 9 a.m. Before heading out to pick up trash, they will be armed with gloves, vests, event T-shirts and trash bags – and a brief lesson on drug-related trash.

Because of safety concerns, Operation P.R.I.D.E. decided to prevent anyone under age 18 from participating.

“They could come upon needles. They could come upon discarded alcoholic beverages. They could come across snakes. Who the heck knows?” Alexieff said. “For the first year, we wanted to be extra safe.”

Volunteers will be assigned to a pocket of the city’s greenways, likely near businesses where trash tends to accumulate, such as Walmart near Morgantown Road, Kroger on U.S. 31-W By-Pass and the Dollar General store on Porter Pike.

The locations have not been finalized. Operation P.R.I.D.E. staff will drive through the county this week to identify the worst areas.

“We want to give everyone an opportunity to really make an impact,” Alexieff said.

After the areas are cleaned, each team will take a picture with the litter piles, and event sponsor Republic Services will collect the trash.



The volunteers will then reconvene at Kereiakes Park for lunch provided by Wendy’s and participatory awards.

Nearly 90 people had signed up by Monday, including individuals and groups such as Western Kentucky University Greek organizations, Habitat for Humanity and Bike/Walk BG. Faculty and students from Southern Kentucky Community Technical College will collect trash from a greenway corridor near campus Friday.

The official deadline to register for Saturday's event is Tuesday, but individuals can contact Operation P.R.I.D.E for more information on volunteering.

"We want to keep it a manageable size for the first year to figure out the quirks," Alexieff said.

The plan is to host a "Clean the Green" every third weekend in March, as trash – especially cigarettes – is an ongoing issue in Bowling Green.

"If people did not litter, we would not have the problem," Alexieff said.

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